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**WANDERERS GO
RACING ON—
WITH DAVE
IN GOAL!**

DAVE BULLOCK, who lost his place to Alan Phillips at the start of the season and then suffered a niggling ankle injury, returned to the side at Walthamstow on Thursday night — in goal. And it was his confidence as much as anything else that steered Wycombe Wanderers to three more invaluable Rothmans Isthmian League points.

Regular goalkeeper John Maskell went down with tonsillitis on Wednesday, leaving Wycombe with quite a problem. They couldn't call on the services of Brian Steventon, who is living in Crewe at the moment

By **STUART EARP**

and so it was a question of either playing Charlie Palmer, the keeper they signed recently from Thatcham to play the odd game, or Dave Bullock.

Dave played only one game in goal for Wycombe last season, against Enfield. He will remember the match well for in the first 45 seconds he presented the opponents with a goal on a plate. After that, he accustomed himself to the new role and helped Wycombe to a 2-1 win. On this occasion, he made no such mistake. A natural ball player, his handling was almost faultless while his goalkicking almost matched Maskell's. With a nasty ankle injury still plaguing him, Dave would do well to

Walthamstow A. 0, Wycombe W. 2

consider making this a full time position in the future.

The only other change in the side was in midfield where Howard Kennedy replaced Dave Alexander, Paul Birdseye continuing at right back. Steve Perrin remained on the sub's bench for the second successive game — a strange decision by manager Brian Lee.

After playing on slow and near waterlogged pitches in recent weeks, Wanderers had to get used to a rock hard Walthamstow pitch on Thursday. Green Pond Lane, notoriously one of the poorest pitches in the league, was liberally covered with sand in

places while the ball bounced unpredictably and much higher than normal.

Wycombe started the match at a cracking pace and forced their first corner after just 60 seconds. Two minutes later Gary Hand, now back to top form, worked the ball out to Horseman who crossed into the box for Keith Searle to angle in a shot but goalkeeper Vic Lindsay palmed the ball away. From the flag kick, Kennedy drove the ball powerfully to the far post where Keith Mead powered a header towards the net only to see Dylan Evans get in the way and block the ball.

Kennedy flashed a wild shot over the bar after seven minutes

but a minute later Bullock sent a seige-gun goalkick downfield. Avenue gave away a free kick which Horseman bent into the box and in roared Alan Phillips to send a perfectly placed header into the corner of the net.

The early goal, a vital advantage for the Blues, was just reward for their early pressure and for the remainder of the half, they were seldom troubled by Avenue. The home side sent in a few high crosses which Bullock dealt with comfortably.

At the other end, goals looked more likely. A cross by Paul Birdseye was met by Kennedy, who thundered in a lightning volley all along the ground. Lindsay pulled off the save of the night to smother the effort.

Flowing football was obviously exceedingly difficult on this surface and even the fundamental aspects of the game, like trapping and passing the ball, were difficult.

Avenue gave a sign of things to come in the second half with two quick corners before half time but again, in the early stages, it was Wanderers who made all the running. In the very first minute Holifield, who worked much harder in midfield, broke through into the box after good work by Searle. Taking the ball on he drove in a shot which flew across the goalline and inches past the far post. Searle rifled in another shot soon afterwards but Lindsay was well positioned to save.

It was about midway through the second half, that things began to get difficult for Wycombe. Walthamstow had been well looked after at the back by Phillips and Mead while Terry Reardon did a fine job of cancelling out the danger of Brian Jackson in midfield. Three Walthamstow corners, however, signalled the start of some concerted pressure from the home side.

From the third Bullock did well to hold onto a deflected shot by Ken Bowen, despite being partially unsighted by Dave Collins. For a time, Wycombe were happy to thump the ball away downfield in the hope of a breather. They seemed to lose out in midfield, where Kennedy faded badly as the match wore on.

When they did get the ball under control, the visitors' finishing was very poor. They tried too many shots from long range which flew to different parts of the ground and usually a good way off the target.

The arrival of Perrin in place of Horseman improved matters for Wycombe and the substitute soon made his presence felt with a superb reverse pass to Searle who took the ball on to the six yard box where Lindsay raced out to block the shot.

Then, in the 78th minute, Wanderers hit their second goal and at the same time wiped out any fears of a Walthamstow equaliser. It came from about the best move of the match and one that certainly deserved a goal.

Perrin broke clear of the defence near the right flank and cut in. His cross caught the defence wrong-footed and although two players left their feet trailing in a bid to cut the ball off, it continued its path across the goal until Holifield raced in to thump in a nicely placed drive firmly into the net.

Evans, who hit four goals against Avenue here a year ago, saw a drive pushed away by Lindsay in the dying seconds and at the final whistle, Wanderers were well and truly in control.

WALTHAMSTOW: V. Lindsay, P. O'Reilly, M. Jones, D. Collins, K. Bowen, T. Smith, J. Reading, R. Wiles, T. Howard, B. Jackson, J. Knapman. Sub. S. Cooper (not used).

WYCOMBE: D. Bullock, P. Birdseye, K. Mead, A. Phillips, G. Hand, H. Kennedy, T. Reardon, M. Holifield, A. Horseman (sub. S. Perrin 66 mins.), K. Searle, D. Evans.

Referee: C. Gregory (Woking).

Half-time: 0-1. **Goalscorers:** Wycombe — Phillips (8), Holifield (78).



DAVE BULLOCK
... fine handling.